



CENTRAL OREGON
community college

OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT
541.383.7201
smetcalf@cocc.edu

June 5, 2017

Senate Committee on Finance and Revenue
Senator Mark Hass, Chair
Senator Brian Boquist, Vice-Chair
900 Court Street NE, Room 354
Salem, Oregon 97301

RE: Support for HB 2745B

Chair Hass, Vice-Chair Boquist, and Members of the Committee:

I am writing today to urge you to support the bill currently before the legislature, HB 2745B, which will give voters in Central Oregon a choice on whether their areas should fund a public transit system.

Transportation is one of the major barriers our students face in their challenge to pursuing their educational dreams at Central Oregon Community College. You may remember that at your hearing in Bend last summer, one of our students told her story of daily struggles with transportation and how important accessible and affordable public transportation has been for her. For our students from Prineville and La Pine, from Warm Springs and Fort Rock, and those from all of the rural parts of our 10,000 square mile District, transportation often is what makes it impossible to improve their lives through college.

HB 2745B offers a number of benefits to our Central Oregon Communities. It gives them local control -- each city can choose the appropriate level of service, funding amount, and tool for funding transit in their community. It maximizes efficiency, by retaining regional management for the transit system, minimizing costs and optimizing streamlined and convenient service. It drives economic development, helping local companies attract workers by giving employees a public transportation option that saves time and money. Some communities may choose to ask voters to support funding initiatives, and other communities may not be ready any time soon. Giving Central Oregon communities the option to seek transit funding from voters is important to our region.

We ask the Senate Finance and Revenue Committee to support the passage of HB 2745B this session. Thank you for giving local control of future transit initiatives into the hands of Central Oregon voters.

Sincerely,


Dr. Shirley I. Metcalf
President